

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NATIONAL CENTER FOR SENIORS HOUSING RESEARCH OPENS LIFEWISE HOME TO THE PUBLIC

**Home Open to Commemorate National Aging in Place Week
November 9-15, 2003**

November 7, 2003, Upper Marlboro, Md.—In celebration of National Aging in Place Week, the NAHB Research Center's National Center for Seniors' Housing Research will open its LifeWise Home in Bowie, Md. to the public on Tuesday, November 11, 2003 from 10:00 a.m. until noon. The LifeWise Home, which first opened in January 2003, is designed with home technologies and features that facilitate aging in place.

To interest older adults and members of the "Baby Boom" generation in taking proactive steps to modify their home environments so that their homes are safe and comfortable as they age, and to provide them with ideas and information on how to do so, the National Reverse Mortgage Lenders Association (NRMLA), in partnership with the National Advisory Council on Aging in Place (the Advisory Council), has designated the week of November 9-15 as the first National Aging in Place Week.

The Advisory Council's primary objective is to generate increased awareness that, if aging in place is a long-term personal objective, modifying homes to make them more safe and comfortable should be considered. A second objective is to build a lasting coalition of business professionals in each community to assist homeowners in pursuing their home modification needs. The Advisory Council is launching a consumer education campaign to increase awareness about strategies and resources that enable seniors to remain in their homes throughout retirement. Later this year, the group will convene to develop a code of conduct and best practices model for working with older adults—the first in the industry.

During National Aging in Place Week, Advisory Council members will host events throughout the country to showcase homes that have successfully undergone home modifications, and those that demonstrate accessible designs and features. Many of these events, such as the LifeWise Home open house, are available to the public free of charge. Currently, events are scheduled in the following metropolitan areas: Washington, D.C.; Seattle;

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Los Angeles; Minneapolis; Boston; Buffalo, N.Y.; and Charleston, S.C. An Aging in Place Summit was held in late October in Washington, D.C. to kick off the official campaign.

The LifeWise Home demonstrates designs and features that will allow residents to live more comfortably, safely, and independently in their home regardless of age or physical ability level. The list of features includes main living areas on the first floor, an accessible shower with grab bars, a washing toilet, wider doorways and hallways, a raised dishwasher, a front-loading washer and dryer, a home automation system, and an upstairs suite for a live-in caregiver or boomerang child.

The home is designed not only with aging in place in mind, but also with the concepts of the NAHB Research Center's Marketable, Affordable, Durable, and Entry-level (MADE) Homes project. These include: cost-efficient products designed for durability and low maintenance; affordable products that enhance exterior design; innovative design techniques that offer visual appeal; designs that provide expandable and flexible living space; and creative approaches for siting the home to increase curb appeal. Major support and collaboration on the LifeWise Home have been provided by the National Center for Seniors' Housing Research through the U.S. Administration on Aging, the National Housing Endowment, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Numerous manufacturers and other private industry entities have made product donations as well.

The National Center for Seniors' Housing Research is also administering a grants competition for pilot projects to support the Assistive Technology and Aging in Place demonstration program. The program will help to develop, identify, and promote the use of innovative assistive technologies through community, academic, and industry partnerships. The focus will be on:

- Strengthening the relationship between the Area Agencies on Aging, as well as Aging Service Providers, and the public/private sector through collaborative efforts aimed at developing and/or applying assistive technologies to support people aging in place; and
- Developing methods of disseminating information/technology that can be easily replicated.

For more information on the activities and programs of the National Center for Seniors Housing Research, contact Charlotte Wade, program director, at (800) 638-8556, ext. 6213 or cwade@nahbrc.org. For information on National Aging in Place Week, visit www.seniorsafefhome.com and www.ageinplace.org. These sites provide information on nationwide events and publications that demonstrate aging in place home modification strategies and techniques.

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Known as America's Housing Technology and Information Resource, the NAHB Research Center is the research arm of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), and is located in Upper Marlboro, Md. In its nearly 40 years of service to the home building industry, the NAHB Research Center has provided product research and building process improvements that have been widely adopted by home builders in the United States. Through testing and certification services, the NAHB Research Center seal is recognized throughout the world as a mark of product quality and an assurance of product performance.

NOTE TO EDITORS ON STYLE USAGE: In order to correctly identify this company and its work, first reference should be "NAHB Research Center." If clarification of the acronym is necessary, the phrase, "a subsidiary of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)," can follow. In subsequent mentions, "NAHB Research Center" is the only acceptable and accurate reference.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING IN PLACE: Advisory Council membership currently includes ADaptations inc., of Bellvue, Wash.; Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University; The Helping Home of Des Moines, Iowa; Howard County (Md.) Office on Aging; Leon Harper & Associates of Dale City, Va.; Lifease, Inc. of New Brighton, MN; the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Remodelers Council in Washington, D.C.; the National Resource Center on Supportive Housing and Home Modification of the University of Southern California at Los Angeles; The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging in Washington, D.C.; the NAHB Research Center's National Center for Seniors' Housing Research in Upper Marlboro, Md.; the National Council on Aging in Washington, D.C.; and the School of Architecture and Planning's IDEA Center at the State University of New York at Buffalo.